City of Arlington

Neighborhood Matching Grant Guidebook

Community Development and Planning

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OVERVIEW

The City of Arlington has approximately $218,000 available for neighborhoods that have improvement projects to beautify and enhance the public spaces in our neighborhoods. Your neighborhood project is eligible if it:

- Serves a public purpose/benefit
- Builds neighborhood cooperation and involves a significant number of neighbors
- Promotes the Champion Great Neighborhoods initiative (www.arlington-tx.gov/budget/city-council-priorities/champion-great-neighborhoods)
- Has a detailed budget reflecting accurate project costs and match sources
- Has a detailed and achievable timeline including a plan for long-term maintenance
- Meets applicable codes and has identified necessary permits

The City had a similar grant from 2007-2012, and funded projects such as entryway signage, sign toppers, landscaping, pedestrian lighting, sidewalks, and public art. This grant will fund similar projects, but we're looking for new ideas too!

This grant is a matching grant, which means that your neighborhood has to put some investment into your neighborhood too. The match requirement can be met with cash, in-kind donations, and volunteer hours. Additionally, the neighborhood will act as the General Contractor for most approved projects, not the City of Arlington (although all necessary permits are required).

GRANT SCHEDULE

Projects must be completed within 180 days of contract execution; additional time allowed on a staff-approved basis.

Information Sessions	January – March 2016
Call Opens	January 1, 2016
Applications Due	March 15, 2016
Committee Meets by	April 5, 2016
Council Approval by	April 26, 2016
Contracts Signed/Training Conducted	May 2016
Mid-project Reporting Due By**	August 2016
Project Closeout By**	November 2016

** unless an extension is granted by city staff

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Attendance at a Neighborhood Matching Grant Information Session by the Project Team Leader is required before submitting an application. Information Sessions will be held:

Monday, January 11, 2016 **6:30 pm**	West Police Service Center Community Room 2060 W Green Oaks Blvd Arlington, TX 76013
Saturday, January 30, 2016 **10:30 am**	Northeast Branch Library Community Room 1905 Brown Blvd Arlington, TX 76006
Thursday, February 4, 2016 **6:00 pm**	Southwest Branch Library Community Room 3311 SW Green Oaks Blvd Arlington, TX 76017
Thursday, February 18, 2016 **6:00 pm**	Southeast Branch Library Community Room 900 SE Green Oaks Blvd Arlington, TX 76018
Wednesday, February 24, 2016 **6:30 pm**	East Police Service Center Community Room 2001 New York Avenue Arlington, TX 76010
Saturday, March 5, 2016 **9:30 am**	Arlington City Hall Council Briefing Room (3rd Floor) 101 W Abram Street Arlington, TX 76010

If unable to attend any of these sessions, please contact city staff to discuss setting up an appointment at neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov.

ELIGIBLE GROUPS

Groups eligible to apply for the neighborhood matching grant must be:

- A neighborhood group registered with City (www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/neighborhoods/organizations), with information updated within the past year.
- All groups/fiscal agents must be an established organization with a separate bank account for their organization, as well as an Employer Identification Number (EIN) issued by the IRS.
- Membership in the organization must be open to all households within the neighborhood.

FUNDING LEVELS

Maximum funding levels are determined by the type of group that is applying:

Neighborhood Group Type	Maximum funding amount
Any	$3,000
Nonprofit organization or has partner organization with non-profit designation acting as fiscal agent	$15,000
Approved neighborhood plan required, along with nonprofit status or fiscal agent	$50,000

MATCH REQUIREMENTS

Grant funds must be met with a minimum 10% cash match and a 10% additional match, for a total 20% minimum match.* The additional match can come in the form of cash, volunteer labor, donated professional services, or donated materials.

Donated cash must be available in your organization's bank account at time of application. A statement or some other form showing account balance is required for documentation.
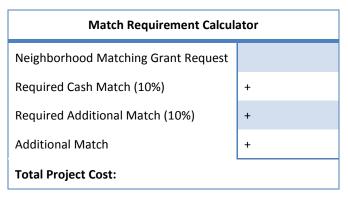
Volunteer labor will come from the community to do the work for the project. The current volunteer labor rate is $15/hour. Documentation of volunteer hours worked is required for grant reporting. Pledge sheets are not required for the application, but it is recommended that the Team Leader collect commitments from volunteers when planning the project.

Donated professional services can be anything you will hire a contractor to do, but for which they might offer to waive all or a portion of their usual fee. This includes work done by architects, landscape architects, engineers, sign contractors, electricians, etc. A letter from the professional on their letterhead documenting their usual fee and how much they are donating is required for the application.

Donated materials can be any material donated by a business or individual for the project. This includes items such as plant materials and signage. Documentation of these donations is required for the application.

* The City reserves the right to adjust this requirement on a case-by-case basis.

Match Requirement Calculator: Use this Calculator to estimate how much match you will need based on your planned grant request:

Match Requirement Calculator	
Neighborhood Matching Grant Request	
Required Cash Match (10%)	+
Required Additional Match (10%)	+
Additional Match	+
Total Project Cost:	

1. Enter the anticipated Neighborhood Matching Grant Request.
2. The Required Cash Match will auto-calculate.
3. The Required Additional Match will auto-calculate. This additional match can be in the form of Volunteer Labor, Donated Services, Donated Materials, or Cash.
4. If you expect to have any additional match provided, you can enter that on the "Additional Match" row.
5. The Total Project Cost will show how much the total cost of the project could be.

FISCAL AGENTS

A fiscal agent will handle, track, and administer the grant funds. Fiscal agents must be IRS designated nonprofit organizations. Previous fiscal agents included religious organizations, YMCA's, other neighborhood groups, and other local non-profits. Fiscal agents should be used when the neighborhood organization does not have the capacity or organizational structure to manage the grant on their own. Because fiscal agents are taking

responsibility of the grant funds, we recommend they hold a Fiduciary Liability insurance policy in the amount of $1,000,000 per claim and aggregate.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

If your neighborhood is requesting more than $3,000, the neighborhood organization must be insured with a Non-Profit Liability policy with $1,000,000 limit per claim and aggregate. As mentioned above, if your neighborhood is using a fiscal agent, we recommend the fiscal agent purchase a Fiduciary Liability insurance policy in the amount of $1,000,000 per claim and aggregate.

PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS

If a project involves any City departments, such as Parks and Recreation or Public Works and Transportation, groups should coordinate with them prior to submittal and document their input/coordination in the submittal.

Permits that may be required include fence, sign, and irrigation permits. Applications can be found online here: www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/building-zoning-forms. All permits must be issued to a registered contractor. Requirements for fencing can be found in the Unified Development Code (www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc), Section 5.3.4. Sign requirements are found in Article 7. Irrigation system requirements can be found here: www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/technical-bulletins under "Irrigation Codes."

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

Projects funded with a neighborhood matching grant are intended to have a long-term positive impact on your neighborhood. Applications must have a well-developed, long-term plan for maintaining and/or repairing any improvements you make on private property.

For projects on public property, provide documentation that any affected City departments have discussed your project with you and are able to take on the responsibilities of maintaining your improvements, if applicable. Documentation can include a letter or emails from the departments.

Ultimately, it is important that projects funded by the neighborhood matching grant look just as good 5-10 years from now as they do when you finish the project. We imagine that you probably want the same thing for your neighborhood. ☺

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Eligible projects must meet a public purpose and benefit a neighborhood. Eligible project types include (but are not limited to):

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS LIST	
Community Capacity Building	Communication/outreach tools Historic preservation projects Neighborhood clean up Public art
Crime and Safety	Crime prevention activities
Beautification	Community gardens Drip irrigation systems for approved landscaping projects Landscaping Landscaping to screen fencing along arterial streets Park development/improvement
Natural Preservation	Native plant restoration Planting along creeks to create a buffer for water Recycling/composting programs
Physical Improvements	ADA improvements Benches Bicycle lanes Bicycle racks Bicycle routes Crosswalks Fencing: only full sections along arterial streets meeting UDC fencing requirements (www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc) Planters Playgrounds Safe Routes to School Programs Sidewalks and pedestrian curb cuts Street lights Streetscape improvements Traffic calming (speed humps, etc) Trails
Signage	Neighborhood entrance signs Street sign toppers
*Creative ideas beyond this list are encouraged, if appropriate for your neighborhood	

Organizations that are not yet non-profits registered with the IRS may request a one-time award for funding assistance with the 501(c)3 or 501(c)4 application. The maximum request amount is $1,000.

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Generally, projects that only benefit an individual or restricted group of people are ineligible for funding. Ineligible projects and expenses include:

- Projects inside a gated community
- Private community amenities (example: pools, club houses, etc.)
- Projects that only benefit individual property owner(s)
- Purchase of equipment for other City programs
- Projects that are not accessible to the public
- Projects that fund a current or ongoing activity
- Requests to replace current funding being received
- Projects that do not have support of the neighborhood
- Projects that conflict with City improvements or do not comply with local, state, or federal law
- Projects that duplicate an existing public or private program
- Expenditures incurred prior to award of grant funds
- Projects that fix a self-imposed code violation
- Educational/social services
- Salaries or operating expenses
- Fencing not along arterials, not in complete sections, or not meeting Unified Development Code (UDC) - www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc requirements
- Plants not on Arlington's Approved Plant List - www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc (under "UDC User's Guide")

GRANT PROCESS

The grant process involves pre-application, application, review, approval, and reporting.

1. Attend an Information Session hosted by the Community Development and Planning Department (CDP).
2. If project is an eligible project that can meet all grant requirements, complete and submit an application.
3. Once submitted, CDP staff will check all applications for completeness and prepare the applications for grant review committee.
4. The grant review committee will independently and collectively review the proposals, and prepare a recommended projects list.
5. The recommended project list will be presented to City Council for approval.
6. Once approved, all neighborhood organizations will be required to attend a training session to learn about reporting requirements and to sign the contracts (a sample contract can be found online at www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/neighborhoods/grant).
7. Once the contract is signed and executed, your neighborhood organization can begin their approved project. When the project is approximately 50% complete, the City requests a mid-project report on the progress of the project. You should reach 50% completion in approximately 90-120 days.
8. When your project is complete, you must "close out" the grant within 30 days. Failure to do this will result in future ineligibility to apply for Neighborhood Matching Grants by the association and fiscal agent. Refer to the "Reporting Requirements" section for details on reporting documentation.
   - Grant participants may request any funds remaining at the successful completion of their project to be used in a manner relating to the originally approved project. This request must be submitted in writing no later than 90 days after contract execution to their contact in the Community

Development and Planning Department, who will ensure appropriateness before forwarding to the Deputy City Manager for approval. Additional project measures must be completed within the original project timeline unless otherwise stipulated. No requests for expenditures unrelated to the original project will be allowed. All project reporting, such as submission of invoices, receipts, etc. are required for this process as well.

NOTE: Neighborhood groups must ensure that any damages to adjacent personal property, rights of way, or any other locations, as a result of this project are repaired. Documentation of such repairs must be submitted to the City as part of the project closeout.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Two reports will be required during the grant project: one report when your project is approximately 50% complete (mid-project) and a final report within 30 days of project completion. Requirements for each report are below:

Mid Project:
- Documentation of expenses paid: receipts and invoices
- Documentation of volunteer hours
- Photographs of the project progress
- Narrative of project status

End of Project:
- Documentation of expenses paid: receipts and invoices
- Documentation of volunteer hours
- Post-completion photographs of the project site
- Narrative of project completion

Samples of all reporting documents will be available on the Neighborhood Matching Grant website at www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/neighborhoods/grant. If you have any questions on the reporting requirements, submit your questions via email to neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov.

COMPLETING GRANT APPLICATION

The application and supplemental forms are available at www.arlington-tx.gov/neighborhoods/grant. Complete instructions for completing the application are below. If you have any questions on how to fill out the application, please submit your question(s) by email to neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov.

PAGE 1:
1. Enter the Neighborhood Group Name and the Project Name.
2. The Neighborhood Matching Grant Summary will auto-calculate based on the Budget Worksheet on page 4.
3. Ensure all items for the red section are met, as these are required for all applications.
4. If your grant request is for more than $3,000, ensure the blue section item is met.
5. If your grant request is for more than $15,000, ensure the grey and blue section items are met.
6. The Project Team Leader and an Authorized Signature from the Fiscal Agent, if applicable, must sign the application **once it is complete**, so move on to the next page and come back to the first later.

PAGE 2:

1. The Neighborhood Group Name will fill in from the first page.
2. Select the Organization Type applicable to your group.
3. Enter all fields as applicable.
4. If your group is submitting multiple projects, rank the priority for each project. If not, select "n/a."

PAGE 3:

1. Respond to all questions as applicable.

PAGE 4:

1. Note: Please see the sample budget sheet on page 12 to see a completed budget.
2. On the Budget Worksheet:
   a. Enter each expense item on a new line.
   b. For each item, enter all fields in a blue box.
      i. Enter the Expense Description and Unit Type (each, hour, etc)
      ii. Enter the Quantity and Cost per Unit. The Total Cost column will auto-calculate.
      iii. If any portion of that expense will be donated in the form of services, materials, or cash, enter the value donated in the appropriate column. The Grant Portion column will auto-calculate using these values.
      iv. If no materials, services, or cash are pledged for an expense, the Grant Portion will be the full amount for that expense.
      v. Note: No field should be red (negative). If anything is red, please check the math for each line. The sum of Donated Services, Donated Materials, and Donated Cash Match cannot be more than the Total Cost for that item.
      vi. For each line, the fields will auto-calculate using these formulas:

$$\begin{array}{rl} & \text{Donated Services Value} \\ + & \text{Donated Materials Value} \\ \text{Quantity} \quad + & \text{Cash Match} \\ \text{x} \quad \text{Cost per Unit} \quad + & \text{Grant Portion} \\ \hline \textbf{Total Cost} \quad \leftarrow \text{equal to} \rightarrow & \textbf{Total Cost} \end{array}$$

   c. Note: Your donated cash must be spread out among all your expenses. For example, if you have $400 in cash donations, but your expenses are $1,000 and $200, you can allot all the cash towards the $1,000 item:

Expense Description	Unit Type	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Total Cost	Donated Services Value	Donated Materials Value	Donated Cash Match	Grant Portion
Expense 1	each	1.0	x $ 1,000.00	= $ 1,000.00 =	+	+	+ $ 400.00	+ $ 600.00
Expense 2	each	1.0	x $ 200.00	= $ 200.00 =	+	+	+	+ $ 200.00

Or, split it between the two expenses:

Expense Description	Unit Type	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Total Cost	Donated Services Value	Donated Materials Value	Donated Cash Match	Grant Portion
Expense 1	each	1.0	x $ 1,000.00	= $ 1,000.00 =	+	+	+ $ 200.00	+ $ 800.00
Expense 2	each	1.0	x $ 200.00	= $ 200.00 =	+	+	+ $ 200.00	+ $ 0.00

            It is up to you how you divide up your cash, but all cash must be accounted for and available in your bank account.

    d.   On the Volunteer Labor line, enter the total number of volunteer hours pledged towards this project. The volunteer labor rate is set at $15/hour.

        i.   Note: no pledge forms for volunteer hours are required for the application, but you are encouraged to get commitments from your neighbors.

3. The Grant Summary section will auto-calculate based on the expenses entered. The match percentages meet the minimum requirements.

PAGE 5:

1. Describe how you arrived at the budget estimates and the make-up of your match.

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Ensure the application form and budget worksheet are completely filled out.
2. Print the first page of the application, and obtain signatures from the Team Leader and Fiscal Agent Authorized Official, if applicable. Scan the page and include it with all other required documents.
3. Ensure all Required Documents listed on the bottom of page 5 are scanned if needed and ready to be sent.
4. Save the application and attach it to an email to be sent to neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov , or click the red button in the center of page 5 automatically attach it.
5. Attach all required documents to the same email. Please note that the maximum attachment size is 10 MB. If you need to send any documents in an additional email, ensure the email includes the Neighborhood Group name and the Project Name.
6. If technical issues prevent emailing the required documents, supporting documents can be either:
    a.   Brought into the One Start Development Center on the second floor of City Hall at 101 West Abram Street, or
    b.   mailed to:

            Neighborhood Matching Grant
            Community Development & Planning
            101 West Abram Street
            PO Box 90231 MS 01-0260
            Arlington, TX 76004-3231

    c.   Please note: the application **must** be emailed to neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov

SAMPLE BUDGET WORKSHEET

Budget Worksheet								
Expense Description	**Unit Type**	**Quantity**	**Cost per Unit**	**Total Cost**	**Donated Services Value**	**Donated Materials Value**	**Donated Cash Match**	**Grant Portion**
Soil Prep Labor	each	1.0	x $ 500.00	= $ 500.00	= $ 125.00	+	+	+ $ 375.00
Soil Prep Materials	each	1.0	x $ 250.00	= $ 250.00	=	+	+ $ 250.00	+ $ 0.00
Greggs Salvia	each	12.0	x $ 8.00	= $ 96.00	=	+	+	+ $ 96.00
Broom Sedge	each	15.0	x $ 8.00	= $ 120.00	=	+	+	+ $ 120.00
Purple Trailing Lantana	each	12.0	x $ 2.50	= $ 30.00	=	+	+	+ $ 30.00
Mountain Sage	each	12.0	x $ 30.00	= $ 360.00	=	+	+	+ $ 360.00
Wood Violet	each	50.0	x $ 3.00	= $ 150.00	=	+	+	+ $ 150.00
Coral Berry	each	24.0	x $ 20.00	= $ 480.00	=	+	+	+ $ 480.00
Decorative Rock and Stone	each	8.0	x $ 70.00	= $ 560.00	=	+	+	+ $ 560.00
Sign Installation	each	1.0	x $ 300.00	= $ 300.00	=	+	+ $ 100.00	+ $ 200.00
New Sign	each	1.0	x $ 600.00	= $ 600.00	=	+	+	+ $ 600.00
VA			x	= $ 0.00	=	+	+	+ $ 0.00
			x	= $ 0.00	=	+	+	+ $ 0.00
			x	= $ 0.00	=	+	+	+ $ 0.00
Volunteer Labor	hours	20.0	x $ 15.00	= $ 300.00	= $ 300.00			
			Totals	$ 3,746.00	= $ 425.00	+ $ 0.00	+ $ 350.00	+ $ 2,971.00

Grant Summary			
Neighborhood Matching Grant Request	$ 2,971.00		
Cash Match	+ $ 350.00	**Cash Match Provided** (minimum 10%)	11.8%
Additional Match	+ $ 425.00	**Total Match Provided** (minimum 20%)	26.1%
Total Project Cost	$ 3,746.00		

CONTACT INFORMATION

Project Types	Responsible Department	Contact Information
General Grant Information	Community Development & Planning	neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov
Traffic Calming, Street Signs, Street Lights	Community Development & Planning	neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov
Signage, Fencing, Irrigation Projects	Community Development & Planning	neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov
Crime Prevention Projects	Police Department	www.arlingtontx.gov/police (Crime Prevention & Get Involved) 817.459.5725
Park Projects	Parks and Recreation Department	817.459.5474

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How do I register my Neighborhood Group?

A: Use the form found on the top of this page: www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/neighborhoods/organizations

Q: How does my neighborhood group get an Employer Identification Number (EIN)?

A: An EIN is free to obtain from the Internal Revenue Service online, by fax, mail, or telephone by visiting www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&-Self-Employed/How-to-Apply-for-an-EIN.

Q: Can neighborhood groups partner together on an application?

A: In some cases, multiple neighborhoods can and should work together on a large-scale project. The funding amount will still be capped at a maximum of $50,000. If you would like to determine if your project is suitable for a neighborhood group partnership, please contact City staff at an Information Session, or by emailing neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov.

Q: If our neighborhood applies for more than one grant, can we apply for the maximum amount our group is eligible for on each application?

A: No. The maximum award amount is per neighborhood group. The reason for applying for multiple grants per neighborhood group would be if your proposed projects were significantly different from each other, and should be considered separately – for example, you want to do a landscaping project and a traffic calming project. If you're not sure if you should apply for a single grant, or multiple grants (up to 3), please contact us at neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov.

Q: Can time spent preparing application count towards match?

A: No. While we want you to take sufficient time to put together the best proposal for your neighborhood, this time cannot be counted towards your match requirement as volunteer time.

Q: Can volunteer hours completed before grant awarded count?

A: No. The project that you apply for grant funds for is considered its own, independent project by the City, so no hours completed towards a complementary project can be counted towards the match requirement as volunteer time for this project.

Q: Can groups apply for more than one grant per funding cycle?

A: Groups can apply for funding for up to three projects. Applicants must rank the projects in order of preference.

Q: Will projects be weighted heavier with a higher match?

A: We require at least 20% match, but a higher match can help to prove commitment to the project from the neighborhood.

Q: What is public property?

A: Public Property includes rights-of-way, parks, City-owned recreational facilities, or any other property owned by a public entity.

Q: What is private property?

A: Private Property is any property owned by a private entity, individual, or homeowner's association.

Q: How can I find a fiscal agent?

A: Common fiscal agents are religious organizations, local non-profits, and other neighborhood groups. You can use the IRS's website to confirm if a group is a non-profit using this webpage: www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Exempt-Organizations-Select-Check

Q: We're not a non-profit and we can't find a fiscal agent, how can we apply for grant funds?

A: As long as your organization has an EIN number and a separate bank account (not a personal checking/savings account), you are eligible to apply for up to $3,000. If your neighborhood is ready, you can also apply for grant funding to become an IRS designated non-profit organization, and will be eligible for larger grants in future grant cycles.

Q: How are projects selected?

A: All project applications will be reviewed by the grant review committee, comprised of City staff from multiple departments. A recommended project list will be compiled based on the merit of the application and the capacity of the neighborhood group to carry out and complete the proposed project. The recommended project list will then be presented to the City Council for their final approval. Once approved by Council, contracts with each neighborhood organization will be signed so the project can begin.

Q: Our group previously received NMG funds. Can we apply again?

A: Yes! With the update of this program we want to encourage all neighborhood groups to apply for projects they are excited about. However, if a previous grant project was not completed or the reporting requirements were not met, please discuss with City staff how you will address these issues for the new project.

Q: We have a landscaping project, but are concerned about planting during hotter months

A: Projects should be completed within 180 days, but we also want plants to survive the hot summer. If it's not practical to install plants in May or June before the weather warms up, talk with City staff about extending your project period to allow planting in the fall (i.e. October or November).

Q: What type of fencing is eligible for the grant?

A: Only perimeter fencing along an arterial road that meets the requirements of the Unified Development Code (UDC) is eligible for the grant. Fences must be 100 percent masonry (brick, stone, architecturally finished reinforced concrete), or any other sustainable material with more than 30-year life expectancy. Fences cannot be wood, chain link, or vinyl. See section 5.3.4 of the UDC (www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc) for specific requirements.

Q: How do we determine if a street is an arterial?

A: This designation comes from the City's Thoroughfare Development Plan. You can see this plan online at: www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/transportation/tdp.

Q: How does our neighborhood get a neighborhood plan approved by City Council?

A: Neighborhood plans are a long-term planning effort led by the neighborhood with direction from City planning staff. These plans are reviewed and adopted by the City Council and become a component of the city-wide Comprehensive Plan, 99 Square Miles (www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/comp-plan). Due to the amount of time needed to complete the plan and staff capacity, a limited number of neighborhood plans can be completed each year. If your neighborhood is interested in starting the neighborhood planning process, email neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov and you will be added to our list of interested neighborhoods.